

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

SAM-01 CPR-01 NSC-05 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 PM-04 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SP-02 H-02 /049 W

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O P 091600Z SEP 76

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6333

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE PRIORITY

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, CH

SUBJECT: DEATH OF MAO TSE-TUNG

REF: PEKING 1779, PEKING 1778

1. SITUATION IN PEKING AT 2200 HOURS LOCAL SEPTEMBER 9.

2. BY 1900 HOURS THE STREETS OF PEKING WERE ALREADY CROWDED WITH CITIZENS BEGINNING TO BUSY THEMSELVES WITH THE PREPARATION OF FUNERAL WREATHS AND OTHER DECORATIONS FOR THE MOURNING PERIOD. LONG LINES WAITED PATIENTLY IN FRONT OF DEPARTMENT STORES TO BUY BLACK ARMBANDS AND WHITE ROSETTES. IN THE PEKING HOTEL, THESE WERE PROVIDED TO FOREIGN GUESTS ON REQUEST. IN FRONT OF FABRIC SHOPS YOUNG CADRES WAVED THEIR UNIT AUTHORIZATION SLIPS TO PURCHASE BOLTS OF CLOTH FOR FUNERAL DRAPES. REPAINTING OF THE TIEN AN MEN REVIEWING STANDS WAS UNDERWAY, WHILE THE NIGHT-TIME REMOVAL OF EARTHQUAKE RUBBLE WAS PROCEEDING APACE.

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3. A MORE SOMBER NOTE WAS STRUCK IN RESTAURANTS AND OTHER

SHIPS, MOST HALF-EMPTY AND MANY ALREADY DISPLAYING PORTRAITS OF MAO DRAPED IN BLACK AND WHITE. SHOW WIKOWS WERE DRAPED IN BLACK, RELIEVED ONLY BY A LARGE WHITE CLOTH ROSETTE-A UNIFORM, EVIDENTLY PRE-ARRANGED MOTIF. BY 2000 HOURS, IN SOME RESIDENTIAL AREAS OF PEKING A FLAG AT HALF-MAST FLEW AT EVERY DOORWAY.

4. IN TIEN AN MEN SQUARE A SMALL CROWD OF PEOPLE GATHERED AROUND THE MARTYRS' MONUMENT ARRIVED AND SET UP THE USUAL CHAINS TO PROHIBIT ENTRY TO THE UPPER LEVEL OF THE MONUMENT. BUT THE GUARDS MADE ONLY HALFHEARTED EFFORTS TO DISSUADE ONLOOKERS FROM CLIMBING THE STAIRS, AND BY 2100 HOURS PEOPLE CLIMBED UNMOLESTED TO THE BASE OF THE MONUMENT. SOME SPONTANEOUSLY PLACED FLOWERS THERE -- NO MORE THAN TEN--AND THIS ACT DREW SEVERAL SCORE OF ONLOOKERS TO THE SCENE. THE GATE AT THE SOUTH ENTRANCE OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY IS BEING DRAPED WITH FUNERAL COLORS.

5. MEDIA. TELEVISION PROGRAMMING SUCCESSIVELY SHOWED MAO'S PICTURE (THE USUAL FULL-FACE ONE) AND MUSIC WITH READING OF THE ANNOUNCEMENTS RELATING TO HIS DEATH. THE RADIO, NON-STOP SINCE THE FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT AT 1600, HAS BROADCAST THIS AND OTHER RELATED TEXTS INTERSPERSED WITH MUSIC.
DEAN

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